July 2004

RE: Direct Loan Tools for Windows, Release 4.0

Dear DL Tools Users:

We are pleased to announce the availability of Direct Loan (DL) Tools for Windows, Release 4.0. DL Tools is a multi-year Windows based application designed to provide the following functionality related to all Direct Loan schools' software:

- Rebuild your Direct Loan origination and disbursement records in EDExpress using an automated process.

- Compare the School Account Statement (SAS) report loan/disbursement data to loans and actual disbursements recorded in EDExpress or an external file, and/or compare the SAS report cash data to the DL Tools Cash database.

- Print the SAS in a readable format.

- Track cash receipts (drawdowns), Returns of Excess Cash (2002-2003 and 2003-2004), and Refunds of Cash (2004-2005) for Direct Loan.

DL Tools processes data for multiple cycles. Release 4.0 contains Rebuild, Cash Management, and Compare functionalities for the 2002-2003, 2003-2004, and 2004-2005 cycles.

All Direct Loan schools can use the Compare and Cash Management functionalities. The Rebuild process is for schools to rebuild an EDExpress database in the Direct Loan module. Non-EDExpress users can export data from a rebuilt EDExpress database to recreate other needed non-EDExpress loans or databases. For information on exporting from EDExpress to an external system and creating file formats, see Volume V of the *2004-2005 COD Technical Reference*.

Access 2002

Past DL Tools software releases used databases built on a Microsoft Access 97 framework. In DL Tools for Windows, Release 4.0 and subsequent releases, we are using a Microsoft Access 2002 database framework. Note the following:

- Access 2002 software databases run on all currently supported Microsoft Windows operating systems, which include Windows NT, Windows 98, Windows Me, Windows 2000, and Windows XP.

- You do *not* need to have any version of Microsoft Access (97 or 2002) installed on your PC to run current or future releases of DL Tools.

- You cannot open or view the DL Tools for Windows, Release 4.0 database or other future software releases using Microsoft Access 97. Microsoft Access 2002 databases are incompatible with Microsoft Access 97.

We continue to strongly discourage users from viewing and manipulating any EDESuite software database using Microsoft Access. Making changes to the database, using any version of Microsoft Access, can potentially cause damage to the database structure and proper software functionality and limit our ability to support problems you may encounter as a result.

If you choose to access any Department of Education software database using Microsoft Access, ensure you are viewing a copy of the database and not your live, production database file. Also, ensure you have a safe, reliable back-up of your software database(s) created prior to using Microsoft Access to access live or back-up copies of your software database(s).

Important DL Tools Comparison Reports Note: DL Tools Loan and Disbursement Comparison Reports **are designed to be run using the SAS Reports with YTD detail,** *not* **monthly detail.** See **DLB-02-36** for information about default settings and SAS Option Selections. You can choose other options (YTD detail, for example) by contacting your COD School Relations customer service representative at 800/848-0978 or by e-mail at CODSupport@acs-inc.com or by accessing the COD Web site at cod.ed.gov.

How to Get the Software and Documentation

You can download DL Tools Release 4.0 and related user documentation from the FSAdownload Web site, located at fsadownload.ed.gov.

Instructions for downloading DL Tools are located in the "Downloading Documentation and Software from the FSAdownload Web Site" section of the *2004-2005 Installation Guide for DL Tools for Windows*.

If you have trouble opening the FSAdownload Web site contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support at **800/330-5947; TDD/TTY 800/511-5806** or through e-mail at CPSSAIG@pearson.com.

Note: Some organizations restrict their users from downloading from File Transfer Protocol (FTP) sites. If you have trouble downloading, try again later. If you are still unable to download, contact your technical support staff to ensure that you have full FTP download rights.

Important Installation Alert

If you use Windows 2000 or Windows XP, you must be an Administrator on your workstation to install DL Tools for Windows, Release 4.0. If you are not an Administrator, you receive a warning when you try to install DL Tools. After an Administrator has installed DL Tools, you can run DL Tools as a member of the Power Users group. If your database is on a network server, you must be a Power User or higher on the network (or "domain") as well as on your workstation. We have no workarounds for these Windows rights issues. Consult with your school's technical department if you receive a warning that an Administrator must install the DL Tools software.

If You Have Technical Support Questions

If you have questions regarding DL Tools, such as installation issues, software problem resolution, software functionality, and technical assistance, contact CPS/SAIG Technical Support.

You can reach CPS/SAIG Technical Support from Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. (CT), at **800/330-5947; TDD/TTY 800/511-5806**. You can also send e-mail inquiries, comments, or suggestions to CPSSAIG@pearson.com. A representative will respond within 24 business hours.

You can also post questions regarding DL Tools on FSATECH, an e-mail listserv for technical questions about the U.S. Department of Education's Federal Student Aid (FSA) systems, software, and mainframe products.

For more information about FSATECH, including how to subscribe, visit the FSA Schools Portal: Listservs & Mailing Lists: FSATECH Web site at:

ed.gov/offices/FSA/services/fsatechsubscribe.html

Note: Make sure you include your telephone number in your message. We will research your question and post our response to the listserv so that everyone can benefit from the information.

Summary of Changes
Table of Contents

DL Tools for Windows, Release 4.0

DL Tools for Windows Release 4.0 can be installed as an upgrade to DL Tools Version 3.1. **If you want to carry existing DL Tools data forward and you did not upgrade from DL Tools Version 3.0 to Version 3.1, you must do so before upgrading to Release 4.0.** Version 3.1 is available for download from the FSAdownload Web site, located at fsadownload.ed.gov.

To upgrade your DL Tools database from Version 3.1 to Release 4.0, you must run the Full installation option (for your standalone PC, server, or workstations). Following the Full installation option of Release 4.0, all data from your Version 3.1 database is copied forward into the DL Tools Release 4.0 Access 2002 database. This process occurs the first time you access the Release 4.0 software following your install and does not delete your Version 3.1 database or its data.

If you are installing the DL Tools software for the first time, you also must choose the Full installation option.

For more information on installing DL Tools Release 4.0, see the *DL Tools for Windows Release 4.0 Installation Guide*, also available for download from fsadownload.ed.gov.

2004-2005 COD Technical Reference, Volume VI (DL Tools)

For record layouts, report mock-ups, and other additional details on using DL Tools Release 4.0, see the *2004-2005 COD Technical Reference, Volume VI (DL Tools)*, also available for download from fsadownload.ed.gov.

Product Enhancements

The following product enhancements have been incorporated into DL Tools for Windows, Release 4.0.

General Changes

The following general changes have been made to Release 4.0:

- The DL Tools databases are now Microsoft Access 2002 format, beginning with this release.

- The DL Tools Release 4.0 Full installation process copies the data from your DL Tools Version 3.1 database (if you used Version 3.1) into your Release 4.0 database when you first access DL Tools.

- The DL Tools functionality applicable to program years 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 has been removed, including imports and reports associated with the 732 report.

Browse

The following enhancement was made to DL Tools Browse:

- If you upgrade from DL Tools Version 3.1 to Release 4.0, the Record Source column on the Browse dialog box is updated for all records that had a Record Source of **L** (Loan Origination Center) in Version 3.1 to indicate a Record Source of **C** (Common Origination and Disbursement System, or COD).

Cash Management

The following enhancements have been made to DL Tools Cash Management:

- For the 2004-2005 program cycle and subsequent cycles, Cash Management Transaction Type **X** records are now considered a "Refund of Cash." For 2002-2003 and 2003-2004, Cash Management Transaction Type **X** records continue to represent a "Return of Excess Cash."

- When a Cash data entry is updated, DL Tools now maintains the original Record Source for the Cash data entry. For example, if a Cash entry has a Record Source of **E** (External) and you manually adjust and save a change to the Transaction Amount or Transaction Date, the Record Source remains an **E** and is not updated to **M** (Manual).

Import

The following enhancement was made to the DL Tools import process:

- DL Tools Release 4.0 has been updated to allow the import of all 2004-2005 message classes, including two new fixed-length SAS Loan Level and Disbursement Level file message classes. The new message classes are:

    DSDF05OP   SAS – Disbursement Level (Fixed Length)

    DSLF05OP   SAS – Origination Level (Fixed Length)

Disbursement Detail External Add (DLEXDISB)

The following enhancements have been made to the DL Tools Disbursement Detail External Add (DLEXDISB) record layout and import:

- The Previous Disbursement Sequence Number has been added as Field #15 (after the Disbursement Sequence Number) in the Disbursement Detail External Add record layout. This field is only applicable to the 2004-2005 records and should be left blank in the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 import files.

  For more details on how to use the Previous Disbursement Sequence Number in your Disbursement Detail External Add files, review the *2004-2005 COD Technical Reference, Volume VI (DL Tools)*, available for download from fsadownload.ed.gov

- We have changed the field number for Transaction Date from Field #16 to Field #17 in the Disbursement Detail External Add Record Layout and have updated the field's description in the Field Name column in the *2004-2005 COD Technical Reference, Volume VI (DL Tools)*. The DL Tools Disbursement Detail External Add import process requires you to import the date of an accepted disbursement (which is either Disbursement Sequence Number 01 or if a later Disbursement Type **Q** [Adjusted Disbursement Date] was accepted) record into the Transaction Date field. DL Tools uses Field #17 for the compare processes.

- We enhanced the import edit report generated following the import of a Disbursement Detail External Add file to distinguish between skipped loan records and skipped disbursement records.

Rebuild

DL Tools Release 4.0 supports the Full Participant Rebuild record layout for 2004-2005 rebuilds, as well as 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 rebuilds. Rebuild files will continue to be sent to you in flat-file format, not XML.

The following enhancements have been made to the DL Tools Rebuild process:

- The following fields have been added to the Full Participant Rebuild record layout for all cycles, although values for these fields are blank in 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 Rebuild files:

  - CPS Transaction Number

  - Endorser Amount

  - Disbursement Release Indicator

  - Previous Disbursement Sequence Number

- DL Tools continues to rebuild and display disbursement transactions in the rebuilt EDExpress database in the same order as the disbursement transactions are placed by COD within the Rebuild file. This sort order applies to rebuilds for all award years available in Release 4.0.

- For 2004-2005, when a disbursement is on file with COD, an anticipated disbursement is always sent in the Rebuild file in the Origination Detail ("O") records. When an actual disbursement is on file, COD returns the actual disbursement (highest disbursement sequence number) fields in the appropriate anticipated disbursement fields in the Rebuild Origination Detail record *and* returns the *same* disbursement fields in the appropriate actual disbursement fields in the Disbursement Detail ("D") records.

- When an anticipated disbursement with no corresponding actual disbursement is on file with COD, the anticipated disbursement fields are sent in the appropriate anticipated disbursement fields in the Rebuild Origination Detail ("O") record *only*. No Rebuild Disbursement Detail ("D") record is returned for the loan, since no accepted actual disbursement is on file with COD.

- After rebuilding a 2004-2005 EDExpress database, each disbursement record's Action Date field on the Direct Loan Disburse tab will contain the Disbursement Date sent in positions 26 to 33 of the Rebuild Disbursement Detail record for that disbursement.

- When rebuilding a 2004-2005 EDExpress database, Release 4.0 skips the blank or zero-filled fields intended for COD Phase-In Participants only. The following fields in the 2004-2005 Rebuild file are always blank or zero-filled for COD Full Participants:

  - Borrower's Alien Registration Number

  - Disbursement Activity

  - Additional Unsubsidized Eligibility for Dependent Student

  - Original Disbursement Date of an Adjusted Disbursement Date (Disbursement Type **Q**) Activity

Disbursement Detail Comparison Report

The following enhancement has been made to the DL Tools Disbursement Detail Comparison Report:

- We added Disbursement Date Range as a filter option on the Print dialog box for the Disbursement Detail Comparison Report for 2004-2005. When you enter a date range in this field, DL Tools only compares disbursement records added by external import to DL Tools or within EDExpress for Windows, whose disbursement date falls within the Disbursement Date Range designated and before the End Date of the most recently imported SAS.

- EDExpress disbursement records with a Disbursement Type of **Q** (Adjusted Disbursement Date) are always excluded from this report.

- Disbursement adjustments submitted to COD after the End Date of the SAS are listed as unmatched on the report, even if the adjusted disbursement date you have submitted to COD technically falls before the SAS End Date. This is determined by the date COD processed the adjustment, not the adjusted disbursement date.

Cash Report

The following enhancement has been made to the DL Tools Cash Report:

- For the 2004-2005 program cycle and forward, the Transaction Date Range can now be used as a filter option on the Print dialog box for the Cash Report when the Disbursement Data Source is External, provided there are externally added disbursement records in the DL Tools database that meet the other criteria selected on the Print dialog box.

  Note: The Transaction Date Range filter can be used for all program cycles in Release 4.0 if the Disbursement Data Source is EDExpress.

SAS Detail Reports

The SAS Loan and Disbursement Detail reports available for all program cycles in DL Tools Release 4.0 now display totals for the following categories:

- Total Booked Loans

- Total Unbooked Loans

- Total Loans

- Total Disbursements

- Total Loan Gross Amount

- Total Loan Net Amount

DL Tools Supports These Printers

We tested the following printers that are Windows NT 4.0, Windows 98, Windows Me, Windows 2000, and Windows XP compatible:

- HP8150
- HP4000N
- HP8000N
- HP4
- HP4M
- HP4MPlus
- HPIIISi
- HP4Si
- HP5Si
- HP5SiMX

DL Tools Benchmarking

We performed benchmarking tests on the DL Tools for Windows, Release 4.0 software to determine how it operates in certain operating environments. These tests were all completed on a Pentium 1000 MHz with 512 MB RAM.

Imports

The benchmarking results for DL Tools import files are as follows:

- Records were imported into an empty database.

- The Benchmarking Volume is the type and number of records that were imported in the test.

- The Average Time Elapsed column indicates the measurement of time starting when the user clicks OK in the Import dialog box and the import process begins through the time the import statistics are displayed.

Imports

Component	Benchmarking Volume	Operating System	Average Time Elapsed
Rebuild	1000 originations 4000 disbursements	NT 4.0	4 minutes 45 seconds
		Windows 98	4 minutes 11 seconds
		Windows Me	3 minutes 58 seconds
		Windows 2000	3 minutes 16 seconds
		Windows XP	3 minutes 26 seconds
School Account Statement (SAS)	2 Cash Summary 8 Disbursement Summary 100 Cash Detail 200 Loan Detail (loan level) 800 Loan Detail (disbursement activity level)	NT 4.0	4 seconds
		Windows 98	4 seconds
		Windows Me	4 seconds
		Windows 2000	4 seconds
		Windows XP	4 seconds

Reports

The benchmarking results for DL Tools Cash Reports and Loan Detail Comparison are as follows:

- The Benchmarking Volume is the number of records and approximate number of pages that were printed in the test.

- The Average Time Elapsed column indicates the length of time starting when the user clicks OK in the DL Tools Print dialog box through the time the operating system (Windows NT/98/Me/2000/XP) Print dialog box appears.

Reports

Report	Benchmarking Volume	Operating System	Average Time Elapsed
2004-2005 Cash Report	200 Cash 1260 Disbursements 5 pages	NT 4.0	3 seconds
		Windows 98	3 seconds
		Windows Me	2 seconds
		Windows 2000	2 seconds
		Windows XP	2 seconds
Loan Detail Comparison	54 loans 6 pages	NT 4.0	3 seconds
		Windows 98	3 seconds
		Windows Me	3 seconds
		Windows 2000	3 seconds
		Windows XP	3 seconds

Reminders

Back Up Your Database Weekly

You should back up your DL Tools database (DLT.mdb) regularly so you do not lose your data. We recommend that you back up your files after each major update to your database (for example, entering or importing data into DL Tools), or at least once a week. You should also back-up your 2002-2003, 2003-2004, or 2004-2005 EDExpress database before using DL Tools' Rebuild feature for a particular cycle.

DL Tools does not include a backup utility. You must use your own backup software. Be sure to test your backup software regularly to verify that it can reliably restore your backups.